1:Murphy and Quain E-4,5 (1938) 1955
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857 Among the eight boys below the ages of Autsuki and Javaku there were no clearly organized groups. When outdoors they usually played in small groups of three or four, although nearly all would gather together occasionally for some special activity. The small groups were usually composed of age mates. Tsirikoan, the youngest, spent most of his time in the house, while the oldest boy, Muruta, was already drifting away from the others and spending more time with the men. Tay, an orphan boy of between ten and twelve years of age, was decidedly a misfit and did not join the others often. Of the remaining five, the three oldest were steady companions, while the two youngest either trailed them or stayed near their houses.

[572] Despite the fact that the children were together frequently, there were no fast friendships or strong ties of loyalty and dependence. In this respect they were much like the men. Their play together was sporadic, and participation was fluid and shifting.

857 The only organized play in which the children indulged was wrestling. 526 Matches were infrequent and usually broke up within fifteen minutes. 1169 All the boys turned out on such occasions except Tay, whose interests 838 were abnormally directed toward homosexual play. The wrestling 858 matches were a complete replica of the adult contests, the boys even sitting on the log in the men's circle (this was one of the few times they were permitted to do so). The adults never interfered. Usually they stood near the houses and watched the grappling with great amusement. When the wrestling involved boys of the village only, it was very informal and few pains were taken with their ornamentation. Each bout consisted of trying out some holds and grunting loudly in imitation of the men. The contests generally ended in a draw by mutual consent without any hostility being shown.

Most of the matches were between the older boys. But they also wrestled with the younger children. Even little Tsirikoan wrestled once. As he did not know what he was expected to do, he merely grunted and fell down. The bigger boys were very gentle with the little ones and tried only to teach them.

648 Just as the men were excited by the intertribal wrestling matches, the 857 boys welcomed the chance to wrestle with boys from other tribes. This 526 occurred regularly, since it was customary in the upper Xingú for a boy [484] to travel with his maternal uncle. At one such time, a Kamayurá boy [604] came to the Trumaí village and was invited to wrestle. The boys gathered [17] in the men's circle after having carefully painted themselves and put on new arm and leg bands. The older boys wrestled the Kamayurá youngster in turn, but since he was bigger, he threw them easily. The [576] Trumaí men watched from a distance, silently rooting for their own boys, but laughing loudly as each landed on his back, out of politeness to the visitors.

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All other play was more spontaneous and uncoordinated. Amusement and education were derived from using small bows and arrows which all boys possessed and the older ones knew how to make. Much of their time was spent shooting at insects and other targets in the village, but three or four children might occasionally go together to the lagoon and shoot fish from the banks. Sometimes they would wander off to the clearings when planting was in progress, or travel through the woods to gather guava. Few restraints were placed on their movements.

Nor was the sex play of children greatly inhibited by their elders. Actually there was no heterosexual activity between children, for there were no girls of appropriate age in the village. Thus, pre-pubescent sexual relations occurred between boys or between boys and men, and almost always it was the boys who were the instigators. Quain felt certain that Tay was the only member of the village who might be considered a homosexual. He was an orphan, and although he was fed and housed, he was identified with no family, and no one took any special interest in him. Tay, more than any boy, remained aloof from other children. His sexual advances were directed to a large extent toward the older males, who often cooperated with him. For example, he often wrapped his legs around Jakuma's hips, going through sexual motions. The older man would giggle when he did this and show signs of being mildly stimulated. Mayuva, among others, was less receptive, but his only mode of resistance was to arch his body away from the boy.

The sexual play of a young child might even include his father. Quain observed little Tsirikoan tugging at his father's penis. The father showed some annoyance, but only because he did not want to be bothered. Although children were rarely manipulated in this way by the men, Quain saw Yanahi, a young married man, amusing himself and some boys by pulling Tsirikoan's penis until the child had an erection. The boys whispered to Yanahi that Quain was watching, but this apparently made no difference to him, for he continued his activity.

The minor homosexual engagements that took place between the boys themselves were likewise in the nature of play. Quain saw no homosexuality between adults, and, contrary to Levi-Strauss' inference from Quain's notes, there was no kinship tie that implied permissible homosexual relations.[1]

The facts of sex were certainly no secret to the children. Living in undivided houses and sleeping with or adjacent to their parents, they were aware at an early age of the sexual activities of their elders. No effort was made to keep sexual knowledge from them, and they derived considerable amusement from the sexual affairs of the adults. Tsirikoan and some other boys raised a great hue and cry when they happened

[1] Levi-Strauss 1948, p. 337.

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post-natal sexual taboos is a serious social problem. A large group of not very pretty bachelors must use the woman with ringworm or the Suyá captive, whose present marriage is considered dishonorable. These women have no brothers or fathers. In contrast with Karajá, there is no stylized homosexuality. Yet the complete freedom of sexual play results in activities which might be considered overt homosexuality. But to the Trumaí such activity has little emotional content. It does not seem to set up special personal relationships.

"Women are in constant fear of attack. Yet a wife tyrannizes her husband by withholding her favors and pulling the hair of anyone whom she suspects her husband has used sexually. Between married people, sex occurs at night — preferably when everyone else is asleep — or while going to the forest on various gathering tasks. A man and his wife engage in many things together, such as afternoon relaxation, fishing, and gardening. There is companionship even between those spouses among whom the wife is much older and no longer of interest to the man sexually.

"Between themselves, the men are extremely individualistic. Cooperation rarely exceeds kin limits even at the explicit order of the chief. Only when outsiders are present do men band together in a mock display of solid cooperation.... There is only one old man, who is about seventy — all others are under 45 ..... All death is murder. Nobody expects to live longer than the next rainy season. Men always carry bows and arrows for protection. Shamans keep the village in constant fear of attack from the Suyá or Kamayurá.... There are imaginary attacks quite often. Men gather in terror at the center of the village — the most exposed spot — and wait to be shot at from the dark bushes at the margin of the village....

"Authority is lax. The patrilineally hereditary chief does no work and is a parasite on his household. He is self-conscious of the rank of his wife whose marriage has elevated her. He lounges in his hammock, but it is his duty to orate from the center of the village at night and sometimes in the morning, urging the men to undertake group projects. He is the only man who has the courage to be an executive. This contrasts with the Kamayurá where there are several chiefs who, uniquely in their culture, are shy and ashamed to speak and whose orders must be referred through special talkers. It also contrasts with the Karajá where the chief is the best worker .... When the season changes, the Trumaí chief urges the people to engage in the new work, which they would do anyway. An example of the complete independence of spirit is illustrated by the two brothers who would not help the brother-in-law of one build the house in which they all were living, because they thought the mosquitoes would be bad in that location during the rainy season. The brother-in-law built the tremendous house all by himself — the two brothers lived comfortably in it.